children attain a ſtrength of character ſufficient to enable them to endure adverſity without forgetting their mother's example.

The taſk of life thus fulfilled, ſhe calmly waits for the ſleep of death, and riſing from the grave, may ſay—Behold, thou gaveſt me a talent—and here are five talents.

I wiſh to ſum up what I have ſaid in a few words, for I here throw down my gauntlet, and deny the exiſtence of ſexual virtues, not excepting modeſty. For man and woman, truth, if I underſtand the meaning of the word, muſt be the ſame; yet the fanciful female character, ſo prettily drawn by poets and noveliſts, demanding the ſacrifice of truth and ſincerity, virtue becomes a relative idea, having no other foundation than utility, and of that utility men pretend arbitrarily to judge, ſhaping it to their own convenience.

Women, I allow, may have different duties to fulfil; but they are *human* duties, and the principles that ſhould regulate the diſcharge of them, I ſturdily maintain, muſt be the ſame.

To



To become reſpectable, the exerciſe of their underſtanding is neceſſary, there is no other foundation for independence of character; I mean explicitly to ſay that they muſt only bow to the authority of reaſon, inſtead of being the *modeſt* ſlaves of opinion.

In the ſuperiour ranks of life how ſeldom do we meet with a man of ſuperiour abilities, or even common acquirements? The reaſon appears to me clear, the ſtate they are born in was an unnatural one. The human character has ever been formed by the employments the individual, or claſs, purſues; and if the faculties are not ſharpened by neceſſity, they muſt remain obtuſe. The argument may fairly be extended to women; for, ſeldom occupied by ſerious buſineſs, the purſuit of pleaſure gives that inſignificancy to their character which renders the ſociety of the *great* ſo inſipid. The ſame want of firmneſs, produced by a ſimilar cauſe, forces them both to fly from themſelves to noiſy pleaſures, and artificial paſſions, till vanity takes place of every ſocial affection, and the characteriſtics of humanity can ſcarcely be diſcerned. Such are the bleſſings of civil governments, as they are at preſent or-



ganized,